## Plot, a Rose—Heroine, A Lady of the Snows

*POLLY MASSON*, by William Henry Monroe, hangs over that lately favor its literary boundary, "the edge of the future," so consumedly as to suffer plagiary at the hands of very recent events. Its scene is Canada, its actors for the most part Canadians to the manner born, its matter such stuff as Canadian politics are made of—Imperial federation and religious intolerance.

No need even were it possible to identify the rather indifferent hero, William Larned, member of Parliament and Minister of Public Works, but in Sir Henry Bateman, Premier, it is impossible not to recognize Sir Robert Borden. Right here comes in the plagiary. Sir Henry stands in the way of Imperial federation, which is backed by a gigantic conspiracy of influential Englishmen. They plan to get rid of him by translating him to the House of Lords and setting his protege, Larned, to rule in his stead.

A red rose is the hallmark of the conspirators—as Larned finds out soon after he arrives in England, whither he has been drawn upon some specious pretext. They know all about him and have marked him for their own. Pretty soon he undergoes the acid test of contact with the leaders. Of them, Lord Steelton reads to me somewhat like Northcliffe. The surprising Benjamin Body has no doubt a prototype actual whom I lack knowledge to place. Much space is needed to set forth the scheme and the schemers. Suffice it to say, after keen argument they convert Larned, pin a red rose on him—and call it a day, even though Steelton is left a trifle uneasy. But suddenly Fate sits into the game—bidding two in hearts doubled, so the event is left clouded.

The sitting in means Polly Masson, like Larned, a Canadian but, unlike him, of French blood and ardently Catholic. They come in touch one with another through Mowbray, Polly's brother-in-law and Larned's college mate. The Mowbrays, plus Polly, are vacationing briefly down in Sussex; they lay violent hospitalities on Larned and bear him off in triumph to their rural paradise. There, in course of a week end, he hears the other side with a vengeance; he also discovers that Polly is the enchantress met and lost at Commencement years before. Is all plain sailing after that? Not by several carloads. Indeed real trouble is just beginning. Polly is so well up in things anti-imperial and so hot against the banishment of French from the schools that Larned has several bad half hours. Notwithstanding, he gets away, promise-whole, and sails shortly for home fully minded to redeem the promise.

How at last he doesn't do it is too long a story to summarize. Several things conspire to his backsliding—the most considerable of them a tour of the whole country, which serves to show him in part how much British Columbia has to lose, how little to gain, by submerging independence in empire. Also there is the matter of Sir Henry. The good gentleman has resigned himself to being laid on the shelf by reason of feeling that his policy is a failure and himself fit only for the discard. Larned makes him see things differently—then feels free to commit political suicide by flouting the bigots, as becomes a freeman.

After that things happen—things any intelligent reader has known all along were bound to. As to how they are brought to pass—consult the book. Canadians will do well to consult it carefully. Though the victorious adherents of Sir Robert Borden may find it but a twice-told tale, there are others to whom it will be illuminating, shedding light upon things and places now in darkness. Notwithstanding its controversial metier, it is written intelligently, with good temper and good taste. Also and further it achieves the almost impossible by not ignoring the war, but relegating it to a remoteness like that of the fighting wherein Wolfe and Montcalm laid down their lives in equal glory upon the Heights of Abraham. A world weary of the war novel may well take time to murmur after reading it: "For this relief, much thanks."

M. M'C.-W.

POLLY MASSON. By WILLIAM H. MOORE. Toronto, Canada: J. M. Dent & Sons.

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AMONG Scribner holiday books *Steeplejack*, by James Huneker, evidently a sort of episodic autobiography (the best sort, as a general thing,) is announced. Splendid. Where is it? When will it be along?

## Father Duffy of the "69th"

THE doughboy has come into his literary kingdom. In *Father Duffy's Story* the men who fought in France have an Odyssey all their own. Primarily a record of the deeds and sayings of New York's old Sixty-ninth (formally and officially known as the 165th Infantry of the Forty-second Division, A. E. F.) it will touch the consciousness of a far greater audience. Not to those alone who once wore the prismatic shoulder insignia of the Rainbow Division will this diary of a soldier-priest be a welcome record of their own participation in the last year of the great war. It will come to the two million who went overseas, and especially to the infantrymen of the combat divisions, as an articulate expression of that strange chapter of memories so vivid, so crowded, yet so difficult to put into words. It will make America understand better how the war was fought and why it was won.

Unusual opportunities were afforded Father Duffy—among other things, for writing a living book. He has made the most of them. With the rank and privileges of an officer, and a staff officer at that, he was yet on terms of cordial intimacy with large numbers of enlisted men. Of the original 3,600 who marched out of Camp Mills by night in October, 1917, there was scarcely one, he says, whom he could not call by name. The duties of a chaplain not only permitted but required his presence on the regimental front at frequent intervals, and what he did not see himself was related to him by the actors in a thousand comedies and tragedies before the facts were cold in their memory.

These adventures, grave and gay, began when the regiment reached Brest after an uneventful voyage on the former German liner America. From the week spent aboard ship in the harbor and the long journey in "A. E. F. Pullmans," the narratives shift to the Sixty-ninth's first experience of French billets at Naives en Blois, within sound of the guns on the St. Mihiel front where, less than a year later, the first all-American victory of the war was to be fought and won. "Naives in Blobey, we called it," Father Duffy says, "with a strong hoot on the last word."

It was late in December when the regiment left the discomforts of Naives for the terrible Christmas hike of the Rainbow Division toward their training area further to the south. A halt of several days was made at Grand, where Christmas Day was celebrated with a midnight mass and such small comforts as the town afforded. Then came the awful hardships of that march which not even months of subsequent fighting have effaced from the memories of those who bore them.

Cold, lack of proper clothes and foot gear, the failure of the supply train to keep the pace set by the infantry and the lack of proper shelter for the men at the end of each day's march made the ordeal a bitter one. That the men survived it individually and as an organization was proof positive that they were possessed of a spirit which would carry them on after mere flesh and blood had failed.

Then came the weeks of training south of Langres in the Haute Marne, followed by the first experience of trench warfare in the Luneville sector, where the First Battalion suffered the regiment's initial casualties and some of the officers and men were decorated by the French command. Followed the Baccarat sector, where K and M Companies of the Third Battalion had a taste of gas and sustained heavy casualties. It was June 19 when the Rainbows were relieved and that was old home day on the roads of Lorraine, for as they marched out the Seventy-seventh Division marched in, the Sixty-ninth passing their fellow townsmen on the road with much exchange of badinage and greetings between friends of the two columns.

On the plains of Champagne, reminiscent of Texas to the border veterans, the regiment, with the rest of the division, settled down to await the impending German offensive. When it came, on the night of July 14, they surprised the staff wiseacres by stopping the enemy before any of his units reached the line of supports. Before the month was out they were helping to close the Marne salient, pursuing the slowly withdrawing enemy across the valley of the Ourcq. Attacking without artillery preparation in the face of machine guns, the regiment suffered heavy losses, among them Joyce Kilmer, the poet, who was killed while following Major Donovan on a reconnaissance. More than 1,500 casualties tell the story of that week.

With only ten days' rest the division moved up to St. Mihiel, where on September 12 they took a leading part in the attack. Col. Hine, the regiment's first commanding officer in the war, who had been transferred to duty in the back areas, fought as volunteer with his former comrades. After St. Mihiel there was little rest for the Rainbow Division. A few days in the woods of Montfaucon, the relief of the First Division, the terrific fighting in the Argonne culminating in the awful task set the regiment at Landres et St. Georges and finally the race for Sedan—and the armistice of which the regiment did not learn until two days after it had been signed. Then the march into Germany and the months with the Army of Occupation on the Rhine.

Such is the bare skeleton of *Father Duffy's Story*. The flesh and sinew of it are the endless instances of Irish humor, of utter heroism, of high and noble spirit; the bits of homely gossip gathered in hospitals and recreation huts, the graceful word sketches of corners of France, the tributes to Kilmer, to Col. Donovan and to many of the men who sleep beneath the painted crosses in Lorraine and the country to the north; and, best of all, the warm humanity of every line. Of controversy and criticism there is almost none, except it be the righteous indignation to which the Chaplain gives expression on the slowness of allotment payments. Even the action of the corps commander in relieving the brigade commander, the colonel and his operations officer before Landres et St. Georges is dismissed with the quiet and manly comment that Gen. Summerall, having to make a decision in the heat of action, had erred, though his judgment must be accepted in a military sense, even if it is wrong.

A brief historical appendix by Joyce Kilmer, the groundwork of the regimental history which he had engaged to write if he survived, and copies of all the citations from French and American commanders, together with a list of all officers and non-coms who served with the regiment and of all decorations conferred on its personnel, complete the volume.

FATHER DUFFY'S STORY. By the Rev. FRANCIS P. DUFFY. George H. Doran Company.

## Rules for Wishing Rings

ELEANOR SCHORER, known to a wide circle of young readers of newspapers as Aunt Eleanor, has woven into a book *The Wishing Ring*, which was produced as a pageant for the little members of the club she mothers. In its present form it is a gallant story of a boy and girl who meet a royal fairy and a villainous dwarf and who learn how to make a real wishing ring. The author herself has drawn the charming pictures.

THE WISHING RING. By ELEANOR SCHORER. Harcourt, Brace & Howe.

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SIMULTANEOUSLY with the publication of John Spargo's *The Psychology of Bolshevism* a baby arrived at the Spargo home in old Bennington, Vt. "Have seen the baby but not the book," Mr. Spargo wired to Harper & Brothers, his publishers.

## Will Someone Send Us A Lot of These Wasps?

ALTHOUGH the ancient Egyptians are generally credited with the invention of paper by way of the stem of the papyrus reed, and the Chinese assert that their countrymen first made it from another plant, Mr. Edward Step, in his entertaining book, *Insect Artizans and Their Work*, points out that neither nation has the slightest claim to priority in the invention. Wasps, he explains, were probably busy paper manufacturers long before man appeared.

Although man has improved on the insects' methods, producing wonderful and expensive machinery for making wood pulp and turning it into paper of varying thicknesses, the wasps do the whole business with their mandibles and tongues. The objection will be raised, of course, that the wasp's paper is of a very inferior quality and coarse. But Mr. Step, in his enthusiasm over the little winged workers, protests that the wasps make exactly the sort of paper they require, exactly as man does, except in times of news print shortage.

"When occasion requires it," says Mr. Step, "the wasp can make tolerably permanent structures of fine card or papier-mache that is waterproof and upon which a man can write with a pen. What more can be expected of a wasp as a paper maker than this?"

In addition to the paper making wasp Mr. Step writes interestingly of a certain wild bee that is an excellent mason and of another species that is a first class carpenter, making no demand for a five hour day. There are beetles, for instance, which make long tunnels in wood and have been known to emerge from furniture fifteen years after its purchase. Other insects work as miners, musicians, tailors, sanitary officers and even horticulturists. Saüba ants actually bring leaves into their nests, cut them up and grow mushrooms in the beds thus formed. There are other varieties said to sow the seeds of ant rice and to raise it systematically, although there is some conflict of opinion among scientists upon this point.

There are also insect burglars—housebreakers, perhaps they should be called, for they work in the daytime. Strangely enough they are found in what is considered the most highly evolved order of insects—the Hymenoptera, which includes the ants, wasps and bees. But not all of them are criminal, Mr. Step hastens to assure us.

His book follows the trail first blazed by Fabre.

H. A. F.

INSECT ARTIZANS AND THEIR WORK. By EDWARD STEP. Dodd, Mead & Co.

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ALFRED A. KNOPF has just published *A Woman of Thirty*, poems, by Marjorie Allen Seiffert; *The Plot Against Mexico*, by L. J. de Bekker; *The Life of Francis Place*, by Graham Wallace; Percy MacKaye's libretto *Rip Van Winkle*—the opera is to be given by the Chicago Opera Company during the season—and *The Three Mulla Mulgars*, a fairy tale "for children of all ages" by Walter de la Mare.

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BRENTANO'S announces a life of William B. Wilson, first Secretary of Labor, by Roger W. Babson, with the foreword by John Hays Hammond.